



## Technical Bulletin

### Division of Public and Behavioral Health



**Date:** March 29, 2016  
**Topic:** Bed bugs and scabies  
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**To:** Health Facilities Licensed by the Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance

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#### Current Situation

The Nevada Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance has identified a current need for information about bed bugs and scabies infestations. The purpose of this technical bulletin is to advise group home administrators on identifying, eradicating and preventing such infestations.

#### Bed Bugs – How to tell you have them

Adult bed bugs are 1/8 to 1/4-inch in length and oval-shaped. They are almost completely transparent when unfed, and light red and swollen after feeding. They move by crawling (they cannot fly, jump or burrow into skin) and hide in dark, protected sites (cracks or crevices), preferably with fabric, wood or paper surfaces. When looking for bed bugs, check mattresses, box springs and bed frames; furniture; baseboards and carpets; window and door frames; outlets and switch plates; and drapes.



Removing clutter and regular cleaning will reduce the risk of getting bed bugs. Recognizing the signs of bed bugs is another key. You might see skin sheds or eggshells, blood stains from crushed bugs or even live bugs. A clue of a severe bed bug problem is a sweet or musty odor.



Bed bug bites are similar to other insect bites, with reactions varying by individual. The bite itself is painless, followed by swelling, welts and severe itching after as much as 14 days. Bed bugs tend to focus on exposed skin (rarely on palms or soles), with bites often occurring in rows and/or groups.

#### Bed Bugs – Getting rid of them

If left untreated, your bed bug problem will become much worse — it will not go away on its own. Assume that all clutter is infested bed bugs, so start with a thorough cleaning. Avoid using vacuum attachments that have brushes or bristles. Use a vacuum that empties into a bag instead of a filter, change the bag between tasks and put the old vacuum bag into a tied-off trash bag that is thrown away outside. Do not remove and/or throw away furniture, instead encase all the furniture in plastic to starve the bed bugs. Any items that are thrown away outside should be labeled as being infested with bed bugs. Wash all linens and clothing in hot water (greater than 120 degrees F) and dry them on high heat. Items that can't be cleaned can be contained in plastic bags and placed outside in the heat. Repair all cracks and crevices in living areas.

Steam cleaning is a very effective method of eliminating the infestation, but you must be aware of mold potential and do research on what can and cannot be steam cleaned. Steam also can nullify pesticide or dust treatments. If resorting to chemical eradication (dusting, spraying or fumigating), call a professional exterminator.

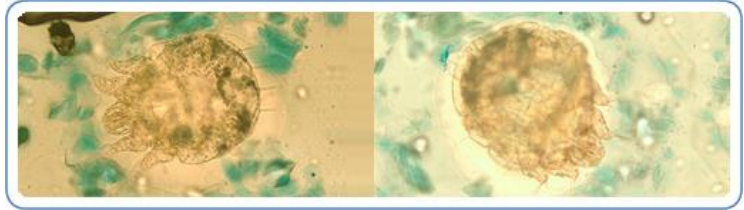
#### Scabies – How to tell you have them

Unlike bed bugs, which are wingless bloodsuckers that eat and run, scabies enter the skin and burrow to lay eggs. A typical case of scabies involves just a few mites, but if left untreated, it can multiply to hundreds or thousands of scabies. When scabies burrow into the skin, papules and burrows appear as lines on the skin, generally on the wrists, finger webs, breasts,

waistline, lower abdomen, genitals and buttocks. Skin scrapings by a dermatologist are used to be sure you have scabies. Secondary skin infections from scratching are common. Scabies are typically transmitted person to person.

### Scabies – Getting rid of them

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, products used to treat scabies are called scabicides because they kill scabies mites; some also kill eggs. Scabicides to treat human scabies are available only with a doctor’s prescription; no “over-the-counter” (non-prescription) products have been tested and approved for humans. When treating adults and older children, scabicide cream or lotion is applied to all areas of the body from the neck down to the feet and toes; when treating infants and young children, the cream or lotion also is applied to the head and neck. The medication should be left on the body for the recommended time before it is washed off. Clean clothes should be worn after treatment.



In addition to the infested person, treatment also is recommended for household members and sexual partners, particularly those who have had prolonged skin-to-skin contact with the infested person. All persons should be treated at the same time in order to prevent scabies from returning. Repeating the treatment may be necessary if itching continues more than two to four weeks after treatment or if new burrows or rash appear.

The topical cream permethrin is the preferred and most effective treatment.

### Scabies – Prevention

Group living facilities should have a prevention program for assessing skin, hair and nails of all new residents upon arrival. Any itching, rashes and/or skin lesions should be documented and acted upon.

Policies and procedures should be in place for group living facilities to help prevent a scabies outbreak. Plans should have procedures for identifying the outbreak source or determining how the outbreak occurred and an action plan to prevent further transmission. Confirmed outbreaks must be reported to the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health.

### Educational Sources:

Nevada Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance presentation on bed bugs:

[http://dpbh.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dpbhngov/content/Reg/HealthFacilities/HF\\_-\\_Trainings/BED\\_BUGS%20PDF.pdf](http://dpbh.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dpbhngov/content/Reg/HealthFacilities/HF_-_Trainings/BED_BUGS%20PDF.pdf)

Nevada Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance presentation on scabies:

[http://dpbh.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dpbhngov/content/Reg/HealthFacilities/HF\\_-\\_Trainings/Scabies\\_PowerPointSlideShowView.pdf](http://dpbh.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dpbhngov/content/Reg/HealthFacilities/HF_-_Trainings/Scabies_PowerPointSlideShowView.pdf)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) information on bed bugs:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Topics/bedbugs.htm>

CDC information on scabies:

[http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/gen\\_info/faqs.html](http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/gen_info/faqs.html)

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Leon Ravin, MD  
Nevada Acting Chief Medical Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JP', followed by the text 'FOR CODY PHINNEY' written in a stylized font, all written over a horizontal line.

Joe Pollock, DPBH Deputy Administrator  
(for Cody Phinney, DPBH Administrator)